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AMERICAN INTEREST IN POPULAR GOVERNMENT ABROAD

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AMERICAN INTEREST IN POPULAR GOVERNMENT ABROAD.

By EVARTS B. GREENE, *Professor of History, University of Illinois.*

In his memorable message to Congress of April 2, 1917, President Wilson, after describing at some length the recent proceedings of the German Government, declared that "in the presence of its organized power, always lying in wait to accomplish we know not what purpose, there can be no assured security for the democratic governments of the world." "We are glad," he continues, "to fight thus for the ultimate peace of the world and for the liberation of its peoples, the German peoples included; for the rights of nations, great and small, and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their way of life and of obedience. The world must be made safe for democracy; its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty." In this passage the President has asserted for himself and the Government of which he is the authorized spokesman two important propositions: The first is that sympathy with democracy, with "government of the people, by the people, for the people," may properly be expressed not only in the private utterances of individual Americans, but even in the official and public utterances of our Government; that these democratic ideals of the American people may properly be taken into account in the conduct of their foreign relations. The second principle clearly implied is that this association of democracy at home with democracy abroad rests not merely upon sentiment, but upon an essential element of common interest—a common interest among democracies as such for mutual protection against states whose authority is secured largely by military force in the hands of hereditary rulers. With the increasing interdependence of all the nations upon each other, the dominance of one type of government or the other is a matter of vital concern to the world at large. To those who think democracy worth saving in America, its fate in Europe or Asia can no longer be an indifferent matter. "The world must be made safe for democracy."

For the defense of these principles, the American people are now engaged in a great war whose demands upon us no man can measure; and when diplomacy takes the place of war we

shall have new problems hardly less perplexing. As we assume these larger responsibilities we may naturally ask, as the President himself has done in his Flag Day speech, whether we are making a radical departure from the historic traditions of the Republic, or whether we are seeking to secure for these old ideals a new and more complete realization. In trying to answer this question it seems best, so far as possible, to let the fathers speak for themselves.

Going back to the first days of the Republic, we must remember that the leaders in our struggle for independence themselves appealed to the sympathy of European liberals not only in France and Holland but even in England itself. That is an outstanding fact in the correspondence of such men as Franklin and Adams, who represented us in France and the Netherlands, respectively. There is no question, either, that this appeal met with a generous response and that it was one of the factors, not the only one, of course, in bringing about that French alliance which finally secured American independence. The policies of the French ministers were, indeed, mainly determined by considerations of national interest. The Seven Years War had disturbed the balance of European power; French support of the American rebels would weaken England and restore France to something like its old prestige. But the French court was not agreed on the soundness of this policy and in the delicate balance of official opinions, the sympathy of liberal French thinkers unquestionably helped to tip the scales in favor of American freedom. Franklin felt this so keenly that he deprecated the appeals frequently made to the French on the basis of their economic self-interest. "This," he wrote to Livingston in 1782, "is really a generous Nation, fond of glory, and particularly that of protecting the oppressed."¹

The great French economist and statesman, Turgot, was not in favor of French intervention, but shortly after the treaty of alliance was signed he expressed in striking language the conviction shared by many forward-looking Europeans that the significance of American liberty was not confined to the New World. The American people, he said, "is the hope of mankind. It must show to the world by its example that men can be free and tranquil and can do without the chains that tyrants and cheats of all garbs have tried to lay on them under pretense of public good. It must give the example of political liberty, religious liberty, commercial and industrial liberty. The shelter which it is going to offer to the oppressed of all nations will console the earth. The ease with which men will be able to avail themselves of it and escape the effects of a bad govern-

¹ Franklin, *Writings*, (Smyth Ed.), VIII, 391.

ment will oblige governments to open their eyes and to be just.”² Thus Turgot, like other European liberals, thought of America as a laboratory where a new political experiment was being worked out not only for the western world but for Europe as well.

A few years later this idea found a partial realization in the great French Revolution, many of whose leaders, especially in its earlier and more moderate stages, had seen service in America. The first attitude of most Americans was one of enthusiastic sympathy with the French reformers, but as the movement became more violent the sympathies of our people were divided. When the revolutionary Republic became involved in a general European war our Government adopted a strictly neutral policy and ultimately abrogated the old treaty of alliance. The Farewell Address, in which Washington defended this policy, is frequently but not always fairly quoted. It is not usually remembered, for instance, that Washington did not object to “temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.”³ In another formal public address delivered in the same year, he expressed his own sympathy and that of the American people with the cause of popular government abroad. In accepting from the French minister the colors of the new Republic Washington spoke of having given his best years to secure the establishment of political liberty in his own country, and added: “My anxious recollections, my sympathetic feelings, and my best wishes are irresistibly excited whensoever, in any country, I see an oppressed nation unfurl the banners of freedom * * * . In delivering to you these sentiments I express not my own feelings only but those of my fellow citizens in relation to the commencement, the progress, and the issue of the French Revolution.”⁴

The unhappy developments of the next few years disappointed the hopes of democracy on both sides of the Atlantic. The ideals of republican France were repressed and almost forgotten in the ruthless militarism of Napoleon. Even Thomas Jefferson, the most ardent friend of French radicalism, was disillusioned—so much so that in 1802 his administration was ready to “marry” the “British fleet and nation,” if necessary to prevent the spread of imperialism to the New World. When, in defending ourselves against aggressions on neutral rights, we finally fought with England instead of France, in the War of 1812, we did so not because of any special tenderness for Napoleon’s government, but largely because the dignity of American citizen-

² Translation in Jusserand, *Americans of Past and Present Day*, 14.

³ *American State Papers, Foreign Relations*, I, 37.

⁴ Moore, *Digest of International Law*, VI, 45. This passage was quoted by Henry Clay in his speech of Mar. 24, 1818, in the House of Representatives, on the emancipation of the South American States, Works (ed. 1904), VI-142.

ship and the sanctity of human life seemed to us then, as they do now, more important than the mere infringement of property rights.

The War of 1812 had hardly come to an end when our interest in popular government received a new test. After the fall of Napoleon the great sovereigns of Europe undertook to organize a mutual insurance society against militant imperialism on the one side and revolutionary idealism on the other. The most consistent defender of hereditary autocracy was the Austrian house of Hapsburg, and its high priest was the Austrian minister, Prince Metternich. Closely associated with the Hapsburgs, then, as now, was the Prussian house of Hohenzollern; then, however, the "great headquarters" of the combination was at Vienna instead of Berlin. For 15 years after Waterloo the people of continental Europe lived under a régime of Prussian-Austrian-Russian military autocracy, which, with the help of a most elaborate system of espionage, threatened to stifle altogether the freer spirit of the revolutionary era. Popular movements in the German States, in Spain and Portugal, and in the Italian States were ruthlessly put down with the help of foreign troops. So far as the Continent of Europe was concerned, the system of Metternich and his associates seemed to be effective.

Europe was then infinitely farther away from America than it is now, and yet not too far away to escape American interest. President Monroe's annual message to Congress in 1822 contained several references to popular movements in Europe. He did not propose American intervention; indeed, any such right of intervention was specifically rejected. Nevertheless, the President did not hesitate to express in unmistakable language American sympathy with these liberal movements. He mentioned the Greek struggle for liberty against the Turks with special enthusiasm and referred to "that great excitement and sympathy in their favor which have been so signally displayed throughout the United States." The message also touched briefly upon the reform movements in Spain and Portugal and praised the "extraordinary moderation" with which they had been conducted. Monroe went on, however, to express his anxiety about the "menacing symptoms" then appearing in Europe. If a "convulsion" should take place there, it would "proceed from causes which have no existence and are utterly unknown in these States, in which there is but one order, that of the people to which the sovereignty exclusively belongs." Happy as the American people were in their isolation, he feared that even they might be drawn in against their will by some act of aggression.⁵

On these perplexing subjects Monroe carried on an active correspondence with his two predecessors—Jefferson and Madison. Jefferson believed that America should have a separate system of its own, but he was willing to enter into an agreement with Great Britain which would “bring her mighty weight into the scale of free government” and so prevent the extension of the European system to the New World. Jefferson had in mind a proposal that the European alliance should intervene for the purpose of suppressing the revolutions in the Spanish-American colonies. Madison was less cautious than Jefferson about confining American interest to the New World. The British Government having declared its disapproval of European intervention in South America, Madison asked whether it might not be “honorable” for the United States to invite Great Britain to extend its “avowed disapprobation” to the action of the European alliance in Spain, and even to join in some expressions of sympathy for the Greeks. Even if such a declaration should lead to war the United States would not be in serious danger in view of the British power on the sea. Madison expressed the same general idea in a letter to Jefferson: “With the British power and navy combined with our own we have nothing to fear from the rest of the world, and in the great struggle of the epoch between liberty and despotism we owe it to ourselves to sustain the former in this hemisphere at least.”⁶ “Monroe himself evidently had a certain amount of sympathy with these suggestions of Madison’s, for the first draft of his famous message to Congress contained, according to John Quincy Adams, an explicit condemnation of the French intervention in Spain and a “broad acknowledgment of the Greeks as an independent nation.”⁷ The determined opposition of his Secretary of State, John Quincy Adams, forced him to confine his annual message more closely to American affairs; but it still contained a strong expression of sympathy with the aspirations of the Greeks for independence. There was, he said, good reason to suppose “that Greece will become again an independent nation. That she may obtain that rank is the object of our most ardent wishes.”⁸

Monroe’s sympathy for Greece as a small people trying to gain liberty and self-government was shared by a number of prominent public men. The great financier, Albert Gallatin, proposed that vessels of the United States Navy should co-operate with the Greeks, and when the matter was discussed in the President’s Cabinet two of its members, Calhoun and Crawford, expressed some sympathy with the idea. Even

⁶ This correspondence of Madison and Jefferson is brought together in Moore, *Digest of International Law*, VI, § 933.

⁷ J. Q. Adams, *Diary*, VI, 194.

⁸ W. C. Ford in *American Historical Review*, VII, 676 ff.; VIII, 28 ff.; *Messages and Papers*, II, 217.

Adams himself, in a note sent to the Greek agent Luriottis, in 1823, explaining that the United States could not take part in the war, spoke of "cheering with their best wishes the cause of the Greeks."⁹ In Congress, Daniel Webster and Henry Clay were in favor of following up Monroe's declaration of sympathy by some more definite action.

In January, 1824, Webster made a long and impassioned speech in support of a resolution authorizing the President to appoint a commissioner to Greece, with the avowed purpose of giving congressional indorsement to the President's views.¹⁰ He maintained that such an expression of sympathy involved no essential departure from the established policy of the United States.

That policy, "springing from the nature of our Government and the spirit of all our institutions, is so far as it respects the interesting questions which agitate the present age, on the side of liberal and enlightened sentiments. * * * As one of the free States among the nations, as a great and rapidly rising Republic, it would be impossible for us, if we were so disposed, to prevent our principles, our sentiments, and our example from producing some effect upon the opinions and hopes of society throughout the civilized world * * * the great political question of this age is that between absolute and regulated Governments * * * whether society shall have any part in its own government * * * our side of this question is settled for us even without our volition * * * our place is on the side of free institutions."

Webster did not advocate armed intervention by the United States in support of Greek independence, but he insisted that such moral support as could be given by a public declaration ought not to be withheld. Two paragraphs of this speech have a peculiar interest in this present crisis of our history:

It may now be required of me to show what interest we have in resisting this new system. What is it to us, it may be asked, upon what principles or what pretenses the European Governments assert a right of interfering in the affairs of their neighbors? The thunder, it may be said, rolls at a distance. The wide Atlantic is between us and danger; and, however others may suffer, we shall remain safe.

I think it is a sufficient answer to this to say that we are one of the nations of the earth; that we have an interest, therefore, in the preservation of that system of national law and national intercourse which has heretofore subsisted so beneficially for us all. * * * The enterprising character of the age, our own active, commercial spirit, the great increase which has taken place in the intercourse among civilized and commercial States, have necessarily connected us with other nations and given us a high concern in the preservation of those salutary principles upon which that intercourse is founded. We have as clear an interest in international law as individuals have in the laws of society.¹¹

⁹ J. Q. Adams, Diary, VI, 173, 198; American State Papers, Foreign Relations, V, 257

¹⁰ Writings and Speeches (Ed. 1903), V, 61-93. Cf. his Private Correspondence, *ibid.*, XVII, 328, 332, 338.

¹¹ Writings and Speeches (Ed. 1903), V, 75.

Finally, Webster declared that this expression of sympathy should be given at a time when it would do some good. "I am not of those who would, in the hour of national peril, withhold such encouragement as might be properly and lawfully given, and, when the crisis should be passed, overwhelm the rescued sufferer with kindness and caresses."

Webster's resolution, though supported by the eloquence of Henry Clay, was not adopted, but it doubtless helped to stimulate interest in the Greek cause. Some Americans enlisted in the revolutionary army and funds were sent over by "Philhellenic" committees. European liberals were inclined to attach some significance in this connection to the cruise of an American squadron in the Mediterranean under the command of Commodore John Rodgers; but, though there was some exchange of social courtesies between Rodgers and the officials of the Greek revolutionary government, there is no evidence of any departure from the rules of neutrality.¹² American interest in the Greek cause was sufficient to bring out a letter of thanks from the President of their National Assembly to President John Quincy Adams, which he transmitted to Congress with his annual message of 1827. In this letter the Greek President declared that "In extending a helping hand toward the Old World and encouraging it in its march toward freedom and civilization, the New World covers itself with increased glory and does honor to humanity."¹³

The attitude of the United States toward the Spanish-American revolutions was the outcome of various motives, and there was at first sharp difference of opinion as to the stand which the Government should take. Henry Clay spoke for those who sympathized most strongly with the South American Republics. He suggested the possibility of intervention in their favor as early as 1816, and in the following year he opposed a bill to prohibit the building of ships in American ports for the Spanish-American insurgents. In some of his most impassioned oratory he described "the glorious spectacle of 18,000,000 of people struggling to burst their chains and be free."¹⁴ The comparatively conservative attitude of the administration, guided by Secretary Adams, delayed our recognition of the South American Republics until 1822, when it had become reasonably sure that they would be able to maintain their independence against Spain. After their independence had been recognized, Clay and Adams were as one in opposing any increase of European interference in the New World. When the Russian minister read to Adams

¹² Letters of Lafayette, in Clay, Works (ed. 1904), VI, 245; in Webster, Works, XVII, 404, 408; in Lafayette, *Mémoires*, Correspondence, etc., VI, 222, 225; Cf. Paullin, Commodore John Rodgers, ch. 13; Richards, *Journals and Letters of Samuel Gridley Howe*, I, *passim*.

¹³ American State Papers, Foreign Relations, VI, 627, 636, 637.

¹⁴ Clay, Works (ed. 1904), VI, 96; 100 ff., 140.

a note extolling the principles of the European system of intervention against revolutionary movements, our Secretary drafted in reply a statement so aggressive in its defense of the republican ideals of his own Government that Monroe asked him to tone it down for fear of giving unnecessary offense to the Russian Czar.¹⁵ In one passage, which was struck out of this rough draft, Adams proposed to refer to "the great satisfaction with which the President had noticed that paragraph [of the Russian note] which contains the frank and solemn admissions that the undertaking of the allies [against liberalism in Portugal and Spain], yet demands a last apology to the eyes of Europe."

What Adams stood out for in 1823 was the idea of defending the western world from European aggression, and that was, in substance, accepted by Monroe. Undoubtedly we feared the possibility of European conquests in South America and in the West Indies; but the great message of December, 1823, the starting point, if not the complete expression, of our present Monroe doctrine, is charged through and through with the idea that the fundamental difference between American policy and that of the continental powers of Europe resulted from the nature of their political institutions: "The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective Governments"; therefore "we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety."¹⁶ In short, the American Government of 1823, before the days of the steamship and the ocean cable—not to speak of the wireless telegraph, the submarine, and the airship—at a time when America seemed a world by itself, thought it sufficient to say that the Western Hemisphere must be made safe for democracy.

Seven years after the Monroe doctrine was promulgated the European revolution of 1830 materially weakened the autocratic governments against which that doctrine was directed; but a still greater upheaval came in the "earthquake year" of 1848. France returned for a time to republican government, and German liberals joined in a promising movement which seemed likely to transform, if not to overthrow, the divine-right monarchies of Vienna and Berlin. These hopes were for the most part doomed to disappointment, and America became the refuge of those German liberals who preferred liberty in a new home to autocratic militarism in the old. Again Americans listened with the keenest interest to the great debate between absolute and "regu-

¹⁵ W. C. Ford in *American Historical Review*, VIII, 23-46.

¹⁶ *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, II, 217-219.

lated" government, between the advocates of ultimate control by the people and those who, as Webster said, believed "that all popular or constitutional rights are held no otherwise than as grants from the crown."

The diplomatic correspondence of the United States for that period shows that these popular movements in Germany were given careful attention by our Government. The reports of Mr. Donelson, our minister in Berlin, described the progress of the movement to liberalize the Prussian Government, then entirely without a constitution, and referred to the interest shown by the popular leaders in the Federal and State Constitutions of the United States. Finally, when representatives from the various German States met at Frankfort to organize a new federal government, based on the authority of the German people rather than of the reigning princes, Mr. Donelson was authorized by the President "to proceed to Frankfort and there, as the diplomatic representative of the United States, recognize the provisional government of the new German confederation; provided, you shall find such a government in successful operation." These instructions were issued on July 24, 1848; and in August of that year Donelson was appointed envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the Frankfort Government. In March, 1849, Zachary Taylor became President, and his Secretary of State, Mr. Clayton, took up the correspondence with Donelson at Frankfort.¹⁷

Donelson's instructions of July 8, 1849, discuss the German situation at length and, though urging the importance of great caution on the part of our representatives abroad and disavowing in particular any intention of intervening between the liberal and reactionary elements, nevertheless emphasize the sympathy of the United States with the popular movement. Donelson was informed that his mission to Frankfort "originated in the strong desire of this Government to manifest a proper degree of sympathy for the efforts of the German people to ameliorate their condition, by the adoption of a form of government which should secure their liberties and promote their happiness." It was the cordial desire of the United States that a constitution might be established "for all Germany, which will render the nation great and powerful, and will secure to every German citizen the blessings of liberty and order. Should either a republican form of government, or that of a limited monarchy (founded on a popular and permanent basis), be adopted by any of the States of Germany, we are bound to be the first, if possible, to hail the birth of the new government, and to cheer it in every progressive movement that has for its aim the attainment of the priceless and

¹⁷ Ms. "Prussian instructions" in the archives of the Department of State; Buchanan, *Writings*, III, 130, 152, 167, Sen. Ex. Doc., 31st Cong., 2d Sess., No. 1.

countless blessings in freedom." The following passage is worth quoting as illustrating the official American view of the fundamental issues at stake:

From what intelligence we have been enabled to gather on this side of the Atlantic we understand that there are, at this time, two parties in Germany, each seeking to establish a constitution for a Germanic Empire; and that the essential difference between them consists in this—that one of them desires to form a constitution, which has for its basis a recognition of the principle that the people are the true source of all power; and the other, a constitution based on the despotic principle that kings hold their power by divine right, and that the constitutions to be established under their auspices are boons granted to the people, by them, as the only legitimate sources of power. It is hardly necessary for me to say to you that all the sympathies of the Government and the people of the United States are with the former party.¹⁸

Americans learned of these things not merely by reading the papers but from the lips of political exiles who found a refuge in America. Republican idealists from Germany like Carl Schurz, Friedrich Hecker, and Franz Sigel found here a sympathetic hearing and gave to their adopted country that spirit of free loyalty which was discouraged in their old home. From Hungary, struggling to establish its independence of the Hapsburg dynasty, came the ardent revolutionist, Louis Kossuth.

Kossuth was a man of picturesque personality, and the Hungarian revolt made a strong appeal to American sympathies, which found expression even in the official utterances of our leaders. The administration of President Taylor showed its interest in the Hungarian revolution by appointing a special agent, with authority to recognize the independence of the new State "promptly," "in the event of her ability to sustain it." The language used in the instruction of this agent, which later became public, was strongly resented by the Austrian Government because Hungary was described as "a great people rising superior to the enormous oppression" that had "so long weighed her down." In his annual message of 1849, President Taylor declared that he had thought it his duty, "in accordance with the general sentiment of the American people, who deeply sympathized with the Magyar patriots, to stand prepared, upon the contingency of the establishment by her of a permanent government, to be the first to welcome independent Hungary into the family of nations." The hopes of Hungary had, he said, been defeated through the intervention of Russia, and the American Government had not interfered in the contest; but "the feelings of the [American] Nation were strongly enlisted in the cause, and by the sufferings of a brave people, who had made a gallant though unsuccessful effort to be free."¹⁹

¹⁸ Ms. "Prussian instructions" in the archives of the Department of State.

¹⁹ Moore, *Digest*, International Law, I, § 72.

After the collapse of the Hungarian revolution, Congress passed a joint resolution, approved by President Fillmore, March 3, 1851, declaring that "the people of the United States sincerely sympathize with the Hungarian exiles, Kossuth and his associates," and concluding as follows:

Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President of the United States be, and hereby is, requested to authorize the employment of some of the public vessels which may be now cruising in the Mediterranean to receive and convey to the said United States the said Louis Kossuth and his associates in captivity.

An American ship was accordingly sent to bring the exiles from Turkey. On his arrival in Washington, Kossuth was formally received by the President and by both Houses of Congress, and was the guest of honor at a congressional dinner presided over by the President of the Senate.²⁰

Against all this official and semiofficial recognition of a revolutionary leader the Austrian Government protested through its chargé d'affaires in Washington. To this protest Webster, then Secretary of State, made a vigorous reply in the so-called Hülse-mann letter, which went somewhat beyond the bounds of conventional diplomacy and has since been severely criticized. It is nevertheless interesting because it contains another emphatic expression of American interest in popular government abroad. The United States, Webster declared, would not take a direct part in the struggles of foreign peoples for constitutional government. "But," he continued, "when the United States behold the people of foreign countries without any such interference spontaneously moving toward the adoption of institutions like their own, it surely can not be expected of them to remain wholly indifferent spectators." Not only the American people but their Government had, he declared, the right to express their own opinions "upon the great political events which may transpire among the civilized nations of the earth."²¹

Webster's ardent defense of American political ideals was doubtless influenced by his desire to stimulate patriotism and so check the rising tide of sectional feeling which had developed out of the slavery controversy. A few years later, the Government whose principles Webster had so eloquently expounded was fighting for its own existence, and obliged to look on helplessly while the same Napoleon who had overthrown the second French Republic proceeded to set up a vassal monarchy in Mexico with an Austrian prince at its head. Once more, as in the days of our struggle for independence, a leader of American democracy ap-

²⁰ Ibid., VI, § 905: U. S. Statutes at Large, IX, 647.

²¹ Moore, Digest, International Law, I, § 72.

pealed to European liberals for their sympathy and moral support. In his great message of July 4, 1861, Lincoln declared that the war for the Union was essentially a "people's contest." "This issue," he said, "embraces more than the fate of these United States. It presents to the whole family of man the question whether a constitutional republic or democracy—a government of the people by the same people—can or can not maintain its territorial integrity against its own domestic foes." ²²

In 1863, after the emancipation proclamation, Lincoln was able to make a still stronger appeal to European liberals, and this appeal met with a hearty response, especially from the "plain people" of England. In one of the most notable letters he ever wrote, he acknowledged a sympathetic address from the workingmen of London and thanked them for the "exalted and humane sentiments by which it was inspired." ²³ He went on to declare his faith in the community of democratic interests on both sides of the Atlantic:

As these sentiments are manifestly the enduring support of the free institutions of England, so I am sure also that they constitute the only reliable basis for free institutions throughout the world.

The resources, advantages, and powers of the American people are very great, and they have consequently succeeded to equally great responsibilities.

It seems to have devolved upon them to test whether a government established on the principles of human freedom can be maintained against an effort to build one upon the exclusive foundation of human bondage. They will rejoice with me in the new evidences which your proceedings furnish that the magnanimity they are exhibiting is justly estimated by the true friends of freedom and humanity in foreign countries.

At a time when a strong section of the English ruling class were ready to recognize the Southern Confederacy and so prevent the restoration of the Union, the ability of the British workmen to recognize this solidarity of democratic interests was a political fact of great importance.

The closing years of this warlike decade brought some notable victories for democracy in both hemispheres, despite the military methods which made Prussia a world power. The Federal Republic of the United States was saved from disintegration and established on a more democratic basis. Under pressure from the United States Napoleon III withdrew his troops from Mexico in 1867, and the imperial government which he had set up there collapsed at once. Three years later Napoleon's Empire at home also broke down under the stress of war and the third French Republic was established. This was also a victorious time for the British democracy. In 1867 the voting privilege

²² Works (Nicolay and Hay ed. 1894), II, 57, 58, 64.

²³ Works (Nicolay and Hay ed. 1894), II, 303, 309. See also a similar letter to the Workingmen of Manchester, *Ibid.*, 301-302.

was given for the first time to a large section of the working classes in the industrial centers of England and in the same year Canada secured a new constitution with almost complete freedom for the management of her own affairs. And with all these changes came a better understanding between the United States and the two great liberal States of western Europe.

The reestablishment of the French Republic gave the United States an opportunity to illustrate one of the interesting traditions of our diplomacy, namely, that of giving prompt recognition to a new republican government. Twenty-two years before, in 1848, the American minister in Paris was the first to recognize the second French Republic, and our Secretary of State, approving this step, declared that if he had allowed the representative of any other nation to precede him "in this good work it would have been regretted by the President." When Napoleon III overthrew this republican government our minister refused for a time to attend his weekly receptions, because he did not wish to give sanction to a step by which the safeguards of civil and political liberty had been "trodden underfoot."

In 1870, when the present republic was founded, the trans-Atlantic cable was already in operation, and in accordance with telegraphic instructions from President Grant, the American minister was again the first to recognize it and extend congratulations to the French people on establishing a government "disconnected with the dynastic traditions of Europe."²⁴ When, therefore, during the past year our Government took the lead in recognizing the Republic of Russia it was following definite American precedents.

A study of this record clearly establishes two features of American policy during the life of our Republic: First, that the traditional sympathy of the American people with popular government abroad has repeatedly been declared in the public utterances of our official representatives. We have not felt bound to suppress even in the formal documents of our Government our inveterate prejudice in favor of free institutions and our sense of the essential unity of the cause of liberalism and self-government throughout the world. Secondly, we have declared with special emphasis not only our sympathy with, but our practical interest in, the defense of other American republics against efforts to extend the European system to this hemisphere. We have done this, partly at least, on the ground that there was a difference between our system and that of Europe, resulting from the difference in our political institutions; that States founded upon liberal or democratic institutions have a common interest

²⁴ Moore, *Digest of International Law*, I, § 43.

as against those which are based upon dynastic and reactionary principles.

Until recently we have limited our actual intervention in defense of these principles to the American hemisphere. As Mr. Olney said in his famous note to Lord Salisbury during the Venezuelan boundary dispute of 1895, we have desired to keep free from the system which has converted Europe into a group of armed camps. We have believed in the possibility of American isolation from the dominant forces of the Old World. During the last quarter century, however, the world has undergone enormous changes. The great military power which has threatened to dominate Europe has extended its formidable system of espionage to the New World; it has attempted to draw one of our Latin-American neighbors into a conspiracy against our territory; its submarines have attacked American commerce within a few miles of our coast. To the ocean steamship and the ocean cable have now been added the airship and the wireless telegraph. It is these hard facts which have put an end to the "splendid isolation" of our earlier days. It is only in a *world* made safe for democracy that America herself can be safe and free.

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